

NCA
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RHODESIAN TRANSITION

ANNCR:

BRITISH AND AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES ARE IN SALISBURY, RHODESIA THIS WEEK IN ANOTHER EFFORT TO PERSUADE LEADERS OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT'S TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT TO MEET WITH PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS. VOA'S RICHARD DEUTSCH HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN RHODESIA.

VOICE:

THE CURRENT MISSION TO RHODESIA IS PART OF AN EFFORT BASED ON THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN VIEW THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MUST BE INCLUDED IN ANY SETTLEMENT IF THE GUERRILLA WAR IS TO BE STOPPED. AN ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE IS SEEN AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS SUCH A SETTLEMENT. ROBERT MUGABE AND JOSHUA NKOMO -- LEADERS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND ITS GUERRILLA FORCES -- HAVE EXPRESSED STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN FOR TRANSITION, BUT HAVE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFERENCE.

THE RHODESIAN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL -- SET UP TO HEAD THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED BY THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IN MARCH THIS YEAR -- HAS PREVIOUSLY REJECTED THE PROPOSAL FOR AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE. THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, HEADED BY WHITE LEADER IAN SMITH AND BLACK LEADERS ABEL MUZOREWA, REVEREND NDABANINGI SITHOLE, AND CHIEF JERIMIAH CHIRAU, CONTINUES TO PRESS AHEAD WITH ITS INTERNAL SOLUTION.

THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT ACCORD CALLS FOR TRANSITION TO BLACK MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. OBSERVERS AGREE THAT THE KEY TO HOLDING FREE ELECTIONS FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND GAINING INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT LIES IN OBTAINING A CEASEFIRE IN THE GUERRILLA WAR.

THE INTERNAL LEADERS HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO MEET SOME OF THE GUERRILLAS DEMANDS. THEY HAVE LIFTED A BAN ON POLITICAL PARTIES CLOSELY LINKED TO THE GUERRILLAS, RELEASED MORE THAN 700 POLITICAL DETAINEES, AND IN EARLY MAY OFFERED AN UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY TO GUERRILLA FORCES IF THEY WOULD LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS AND RETURN HOME PEACEABLY. MISTER SMITH AND HIS FELLOW INTERNAL LEADERS HAVE TRIED TO GAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE RURAL POPULATION AGAINST THE GUERRILLAS BY SAYING THAT THE PROTECTIVE VILLAGES POLICY WILL BE ABANDONED AS THE WAR WINDS DOWN. THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO TRIED TO WIN POPULAR SUPPORT BY APPOINTING BLACKS AS CO-MINISTERS IN THE SALISBURY GOVERNMENT.

HOWEVER, THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO WIN THE SUPPORT OF BLACK RHODESIANS IS MEETING RESISTANCE. AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE INTERNAL GOVERNMENT HAS YET TO DISMANTLE THE LEGAL BASIS FOR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. AND CORRESPONDENTS SAY THE RECENT KILLING OF MORE THAN FIFTY BLACK CIVILIANS CAUGHT IN A CROSSFIRE BETWEEN SECURITY FORCES AND GUERRILLAS HAS NOT ADDED TO BLACK SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT.

SUPPORTERS OF THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT SEE HOPE IN THE RECENT SOUTH AFRICAN SHIFT FROM TACIT SUPPORT OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PEACE PROPOSALS TO SUPPORT OF THE INTERNAL ACCORD. TO GAIN MORE BLACK RHODESIAN BACKING, PRIME MINISTER IAN SMITH HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL RETIRE FROM POLITICS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS LEADING TO MAJORITY RULE UNDER THE INTERNAL PLAN.

THE EXODUS OF WHITE RHODESIANS FLEEING THE WAR HAS SLOWED MARKEDLY SINCE THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT TOOK OVER TWO MONTHS AGO. BUT CORRESPONDENTS IN RHODESIA SAY IT IS DEBATABLE WHETHER BLACK RHODESIAN CONFIDENCE IN THE SETTLEMENT HAS INCREASED DURING THIS PERIOD. RECENT NEWS FROM THE AREAS WHERE THE WAR GOES ON INDICATES THAT THE VIOLENCE HAS CLAIMED ALMOST TWICE AS MANY

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